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A Directory of London Stationers and Book Artisans 1300-1500

By

C. PAUL CHRISTIANSON

The history of the book trade in medieval London before the age of print has long remained a matter of speculation. Few records survive that name the book artisans and entrepreneurs involved with this early trade venture or that document directly their methods of producing books and creating markets for them. In this pioneering *Directory*, C. Paul Christianson assembles an extensive body of alternative data drawn from archival documents that identifies two hundred sixty-two participants in the London trade during a period of two hundred years, from 1300 to 1500. This group includes stationers, manuscript artists (called limners), textwriters, bookbinders, sellers of parchment, and other London citizens active in book production and sale.

The information gathered also reveals important aspects of the City's manuscript-book commerce in its development:

- the congregation of book artisans as a craft community in the neighborhood of St. Paul's;
- the organization of separate book-craft misteries of limners and textwriters by the late fourteenth century, followed in 1403 by the formation of a common craft guild, known as the Mystery of Stationers;
- the importance of apprentice training in the various book crafts;
- the migration to London of book artisans trained elsewhere;
- the close affiliations arising among trade members from collaborative work in producing books;
- the relation of the craft community to the larger urban population and its cultural institutions.

Four appendices list: the first names of the stationers and artisans in the

Directory; the names of more than twelve hundred people cited in *Directory* entries; one hundred nineteen surviving manuscript books associated with various book artisans; and other medieval books cited in connection with the trade, with prices and labor costs indicated, where available. Two maps, one modern and one from the sixteenth century, illustrate the historic area of the craft community by St. Paul's.

C. Paul Christianson is Mildred Foss Professor of English Language and Literature at The College of Wooster, Ohio.

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